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EMINENT PIONEERS

OF

SOCIAL REFORM

BEING

Short stories of some of the Great Movements
Associated with the Glories of
Queen Victoria's Reign

BY

C. N. ZUTSHI, M.R.A.S., (LONDON)
Ex-editor of the "Sunday Times"
Author of "Nine Flowers of Rajasthan"
etc.

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PREFACE

THE Deputy Directress, Public Instruction, Punjab, wrote on the 1st of March, 1929, to the Secretary, School Board, suggesting that the books prescribed for the Matriculation Examination should be interesting for girls. A month later, the Board considered the suggestion and duly directed the Sub-Committee to bear the proposal in mind at the time of recommending Courses of Reading for the year 1932. Presiding over the prize distribution ceremony at the Harimati Girls' School, Lucknow, on the 17th of March 1933, Mr. A. H. Mackenzie, Director of Public Instruction, U.P., during the course of his speech, emphasized the need for a special curriculum for girls by saying that it should be such as would develop all the traits of Indian womanhood.

In view of these eloquent pleas, I have ventured to add the present volume to the Uplift of Indian Women Series which I started bringing to light with the first volume, Nine Flowers of Rajasthan, on the 15th of August, 1932, in the hope that it will not only satisfy the real need stressed by such eminent educationists as those quoted above, but also supply that type of juvenile literature which, embracing in its range examples of courage, piety, patriotism, service, and devotion to a cause, is sure to have an ennobling influence, alike on young and growing minds; and as such, it is sure to play an important part in the formation of character.

In this volume, there is no idea of dealing with the whole of women's work during the Victorian Era, which has been so wide in its range and so comprehensive in its magnitude that even a cursory survey of all the movements falling within its sweep would

far transcend the narrow limits of a school text-book. So an attempt has been made in these pages merely to give a brief account of some of the eminent pioneers in that work, and to indicate the general trend of the movements that they led, bearing not only on the status of women, but also on the social evolution of the age. These little sketches, it is hoped, will also form an introduction to an important and fascinating, but often neglected, aspect of modern history. Besides, the book is written in such an attractive manner and easy style that it cannot fail to make an inspirational reading for the Indian girls of to-day.

Delhi, Jan., 1934. C. N. ZUTSHI.

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EMINENT
PIONEERS OF SOCIAL REFORM

INTRODUCTORY

WOMEN'S MISSION

I

NOT much more than a century ago, the social position of women of the middle class in England was no better than what it is of Indian women of some communities in this country to-day. All professions were jealously monopolised by men, and women were regarded as entirely unworthy of, and quite unfit for, every vocation, save ministering to the creature comforts of men. Domestic drudgery was their only lot—their Divine Right—and marriage for them was the only means of subsistence and

therefore an essential condition for existence. This reduced them to a state of abject dependence and left them all the more at the tender mercy of men. In short, the women of the middle class were the Cinderallas of the house, the slaves of the household in the England of those days.

This deplorable state of affairs had its origin in men's selfishness and haughty arrogance. Women were shut out from light and learning by men who had commandeered for themselves all amenities of work and avenues of wisdom. Their superiority complex led men to block all paths of progress for women and deny them all opportunities of social emancipatian. In fact, the very atmosphere about women tended to be one of distrust : never was there in those days a true estimate of women's capacities for work, never a recognition of their due place in society. Such a state of distrust inevitably tended to straiten the sphere

of their activities, to create a slave-psychology in women, and finally to rob them of all incentive in life. From the moral point of view, injury of this kind is the deepest that can be inflicted upon Humanity, and all the more so, when inflicted upon women.

II

But the pioneer women whose life and work this little book aims at narrating, outwitted their masculine contemporaries in many a walk of life, and, by giving proofs of their noble qualities, won for themrelves a position of equality with the other sex in a manner that will continue to excite the envy of men for all times. It would be a grievous error to suppose that these women suddenly developed qualities they never had before. All those qualities which came to fruition had lain dormant, only awaiting opportunities of exercise. These women fought their own battles against the

severest odds and won laurels in a number of professions hitherto closed to them. They won distinctions in manifold employments, in emigration, in education and in organizing philanthropy, such as leading the movement for the blind and establishing ragged schools for gutter children, by virtue of their prudence, endurance, tenacity of purpose, and assiduity undreamt of by men, and occupied their place in the galaxy of reformers of the Victorian Age. By their many-sided work as Empire-Builders, they became the leaders of those movements and pioneers of that social evolution which constitute the glories of the Victorian Era. These pioneers proved themselves strong enough to burst free from the shackles of dependence laid upon them by the ideas of their contemporary men. They secured their own social emancipation, and emerged the angels of light and paragons of wisdom from the dark

depths of ignorance to which they had been consigned by men. In all ages there have been women who have done so, and so did these pioneers triumph over adverse circumstances to play a notable part in affairs.

History is not wanting in recounting instances of the valuable help rendered by women to men. Alexandrovina, the Queen of the ill-fated Alexander II of Russia, was a true helpmeet to her husband in that she worked devotedly with him in bringing about the reforms that were so ill requited by his opponents as to cause his assissination in 1881: the talented daughter of John Milton wrote to his dictation a great part of her blind father's immortal poem, Paradise Lost: Caroline Herschel, a German girl, rendered great help in astronomy to her brother, William Herschel, who became the Astronomer-Royal of England in 1782: that famous Maid of Saragossa, the brave girl of Spain, when her city was

besieged by the French and her husband had fallen mortally wounded, rushed to his rescue and took his place in the battery: Mrs. Henry Fawcett worked unflaggingly with her blind husband in the domain of statesmanship: Madame Curie was a French woman scientist who, working with her husband in his laboratory, herself discovered the mysterious powers of Radium: and lastly, to come nearer to our own day, that brave Dr. Elsie Inglis worked so laboriously during the Great War that her services have passed into the history of Serbia: another Scot lady got herself enlisted in the Serbian army during the Great War, and was promoted to officer's rank for her heroism.

All these instances suffice to show that a belief in the inferiority of women is all myth and moonshine. Women possess, in no small degree, powers of greatness, and they can vie favourably with men in all spheres of activity, if

only untrammelled opportunities of exercise for their inherent powers be afforded.

III

I believe that the stories told in this book of a few pioneer woman who won fame in various ways, are in a way likely to interest Indian women, in general, and the Indian girls of to-day in particular, as they have yet to fight their own battles on much the same grounds in a country like India where religious sanction and social customs hold the field and have still a binding force, unparalleled elsewhere. Indian women have still to trample underfoot many a social evil and inequity and to retaliate against many acts of wrong-doing perpetrated upon them by men. By doing so they will be able not only to vindicate their own social emancipation but also establish their moral kingdom over the hearts of men. Let them be also pioneers of a new social

order in India as their English sisters have been in England during the reign of one of their own sex, Queen Victoria. In any scheme of social reform in this country, women must play the leading role and take the initiative. Is it too much to hope that these stories will furnish the much-needed stimulus in inspiring the lives of thousands of Indian women to a practical sense of their sacred mission as daughters of Mother-India?

QUESTIONS.

1. What was the position of women in society in England a hundred years back?
2. What is the importance of the lives of the Pioneers given in this book?
3. Quote instances from history to show that women possess many qualities of greatness no less than men.
4. In the light of the achievements of the Pioneers given in this book, what do you think is the mission of Indian women of to-day in re-modelling society and improving their own social status?

CHAPTER I.

EMPLOYMENTS FOR WOMEN.

I

WHEN the history of the social progress of the Victorian Era comes to be written, the claims of women to a larger share in the multifarious activities of England cannot fail to receive, in most eloquent terms, a due recognition of women's capacities for work. This, in its turn, cannot fail to afford a clue to the primary needs of what may be called "the woman movement" gaining ground throughout the the length and breadth of the country. The necessity for a widening of the sphere of women's work was steadily increasing, and it brought into relief the need of technical and higher educa-

tion of women on lines that would broaden their views, increase their working capacity, and stimulate their larger active participation in the affairs of business as well as of public life. The subject of women's employment, therefore, deserves our first consideration, as it was the pivot on which hinged the great changes brought about in the status of women during the illustrious reign of Queen Victoria.

It was the tradition of many ages in England that a woman's duty in life was purely domestic, and that while her husband, brothers, and sons could go out for bread-earning purposes, her work was exclusively to keep house for them. The same tradition had it also in Europe that marriage, to all intents and purposes, was the only lot of every woman, and that the daughters whose parents could not in this way get them "off their hands", had to find refuge in some convents. Even in Italy convents

up to the nineteenth century were regarded not only as most convenient and economical places of retreat for such unmarried girls, but also as the be-all and end-all of their existence. But the centre of gravity was soon destined to change.

As a result of the scientific inventions, following in the wake of the Industrial Revolution, such as spinning-wheel, spinning-jenney, sewing machines and other labour-saving machinery, the demands of purely domestic work on the energies of women were considerably decreased. Thus wives, mothers and daughters being lightened of the superfluous domestic works, such as preparing garments, spinning, weaving, dyeing, washing, baking bread, in the old languid way, could get time for employment other than domestic drudgery. So it was that the need for providing better and further out-lets for the energies of women became more

vocal, urgent, and imperative than ever. Then the improved methods of transport and other trade facilities ushered in an era of change in the industrial life of England, sufficiently far-reaching to shift the centre of gravity from cottages to factories and stores. Then, again, an abnormal surplus population of females over males, made the question of providing a livelihood for women all the more acute, alike from the standpoint of their marriage and of their admission to convents. These difficulties, coupled with other causes already at work, such as emigration, dangerous employments, and over-population, made it emphatically desirable that, by some means or other, women should be enabled to provide for themselves, if need be, to become useful members of society. But I am sorry to say that the majority of people were still the slaves of the old tradition, and were reluctant to part with their

monopoly of the professions. This placed in the way of pioneer women considerable obstacles. Miss Harriet Martineau was the first woman to snap the hypnotic wand of this tradition and to point out the way to reform. She must, therefore, be regarded as the Pioneer of Poineers inasmuch as she sowed the first seeds of the great woman movement which provided new channels for the employment of women of the middle class.

MISS HARRIET MARTINEAU.

II

Harriet Martineau began to direct her tornado against public prejudices which shut out emploment for women of the middle class. She examined the census reports and came to the conclusion that there were fewer opportunities of employment for these women than those for the women of the lower

class. As a result of her pains-taking labours, she put her finger on the need of providing technical training for women of the middle class, so that they could be better qualified to secure more employments than the very limited number of occupations till then open to them. The women of the lower class were engaged largely in agriculture, fisheries, and manufacture, but those of the middle class had to show credentials of their ability, experience, and respectability before they could be employed even in a mercer's or a draper's shop. Harriet Martineau studied the situation and drew the moral that technical education was the only sovereign remedy for the evil of unemployment and that in no other way could the industry of women be made available for the welfare of society and the uplift of women's status. Consequently, in the columns of The Edinburgh Review, she worte an article in 1859

putting her cogent plea on this point as follows:—

"So far from our countrywomen being maintained as a matter of course by us, 'the bread winners' three millions out of six of adult English-women work for subsistence, and two out of the three in independence With this new condition of affairs new duties and new views must be accepted. Old obstructions must be removed, and the aim must be to set before us as a nation, as well as in private life, to provide for the free development and full use of the powers of every member of the community. In other words, we must improve and extend education to the utmost, and then open a fair field to the powers and energies we have educed".

Miss Martineau's article must be regarded as a finger-post as it pointed the way to reform. Miss Jessie Baucherette who was most effected by the said article devoted her energies to giving a practical shape to Miss Martineau's suggestion. After some two months, Miss Baucherette organised a meeting of the sympathisers, at which the matter of technical education

for women was discussed threadbare, and the deliberations of the meeting were to the result that the "Society for Promoting the Employment of Women" was started, of which the Earl of Shaftesbury became the President and Mr. Gladstone, the Vice-President. Miss Baucherette was since then the leading spirit of this society and set herself to work on the lines laid down by Miss Martineau.

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING THE EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN.

III

The society had an Executive Committee consisting of some twenty members to push on its work. These members included both men and women who were willing to devote their time and energies to women's welfare. The Executive Committee started the work by advertising in newspapers, writing articles, and publishing pamphlets on

emigration as the sovereign remedy for removing the evils of overstocking the occupations by women. As is generally the case in every new movement, the activities of the said Society were greeted with hostile criticism; but the organisers, despite the denunciations of their detractors, persevered in the task. As the sphere of work of the Association gradually extended, the forces of opposition automatically grew weaker and weaker, and the hostile temper of the critics paled away. Even Queen Victoria viewed with approbation the attempts of the Society at opening new branches of work for educated women. In a letter to Miss Emily Faithful, the Queen said; "All such new and practical steps for opening new branches of employment to educated women must meet with Her Majesty's entire approval".

The first thing done by the Society was to start a Commercial Class to

give instruction to women in bookkeeping. This was done in 1860 when even the ordinary educational system was very defective, and the Society in order to meet this difficulty had to arrange for giving instruction to the candidates in the 3R's so that their efficiency might be increased. Of this additional burden the Society was, however, relieved in 1876 when a number of really good middle class schools came to be established in many parts of London. The commercial class started by the Society was the forerunner of the Commercial Training which is to this day given at many of the women's colleges. In the same year 1860, the Society started the Law-copying and Type-Writing Classes for women. The result of this step was that a large number of candidates who were discharged after completing their courses, established big offices of their own in many towns, such as, Liverpool, Manchester, and Oxford. Next, the

Society started the Plan-Tracing and Shorthand Classes for women. It also established the Victoria Printing Press, of which Miss Emily Faithful was the first manager. In so many ways the Society not only did much to increase the efficiency and working capacity of women, but also enlarged the sphere of their employment.

The work of the Society became so popular that its offices soon came to be besieged by women clamouring for establishing a big technical school. Having only a moderate income at its disposal, the Society sought to meet this demand by starting what is called the "apprenticeship system", by which the Society induced the artists, manufacturers and tradesmen to admit girls for training in their studios and workshops, in various arts, such as, wood-carving, painting, and lithography, and agreed to pay them fees on behalf of the girls admitted. The expenses incurred by the

Society on this account were to be repaid by the candidates through easy instalments when they got established in life in some business or other after receiving the necessary training. This system proved very successful as the Society could not only help a number of girls in entering various pursuits, but also could relieve itself of a great financial burden. Thanks to these pioneer efforts, many new channels of work for women were provided, and the much-needed stimulus was given to broader schemes set afoot since then which have considerably raised the status of women.

IV

But it was not only in the sphere of purely commercial venture that the zeal of women demonstrated itself: in addition a great number of women began to take recourse to farming and gardening as a lucrative occupation. In 1891 a Women's Branch was opened at

the Horticultural College, Kent, where diary-farming, bee-keeping and poultry-farming could be learnt and diplomas awarded. Thanks to this move, four years later women could be admitted as apprentices to Kew Garden. Then a Women's London Gardening Association came into being, which, while taking charge of all London gardens, became a bureau of expert advice on the management of country gardens and the arrangement of table decorations and room plants. Women began to devote their energies more and more to decoration work', and made fortunes at the houses of the rich,

A decided move in another direction came when many County Councils, Health Societies, and other Agencies, such as, the British Spinning and Weaving Schools, were thrown open to women. The result of this salutary innovation was that, since 1894, women, for the first time, came to be appointed

as Factory Inspectors, Sanitary Inspectors, and Inspectors of Schools.

V

The actual results of the stimulus and the lead given by the Society for Promoting the Employment of women, may be gauged from a reference to the Census Return of the period between 1881 and 1891, which shows an overwhelming increase in numbers of women employed in various occupations, in public and private concerns. Obviously, but for this great women's movement, there would never have been such a large number of women journalists, typists, secretaries, librarians, and doctors of medicine as we witness to-day.

In the middle classes, a high standard of comfort was effected and the probability of marriage considerably decreased as a result of the new occupations thus opened up for women. But with all

these advantages the increased number of efficient women now made available for employment, the cry of opening yet more avenues of work for women grew louder and louder every day; and the worst side of the matter was that the employers sought to exploit the increased efficiency of women by offering them what may be called "Starving Wages." To remedy these new evils that cropped up, other pioneers came on the stage and organised a movement for the emigration of women to the Colonies, thereby providing further outlets for surplus women employees Suffice it to say here that the Society for Promoting the Employment of Women, established in 1859, by opening up the occupations specified above, introduced so thorough changes in the daily life of England that they combined to bring about that social evolution which has made the reign of Queen Victoria so famous in history.

QUESTIONS.

1. What was the tradition of ages in England about women's sphere of work ?

2. What causes led to the removal of this tradition?

3. "Miss Harriet Martineau may be regarded as the Pioneer of Pioneers" Justify this statement

4. Give a summary of the work done by the Society for Promoting the Employment of women.

5. What were the important effects of the work done by the Society ?

6. What lesson do you learn from this chapter ?

CHAPTER II

EMIGRATION

I

IN the last chapter the evils resulting from the overstocking of new occupations have been referred to. The germ of these evils tended to grow to such an extent that the position of the dependent-on-wage class of women was seriously prejudiced, because of the unwholesome competition set in the labour market by the make-hay-while-the-sun-shine class of women who accepted lower rates of wages so long as they could manage to get their pocket money. This competition among women was due to lack of thought among them, or to lack of an adequate appreciation of unity among women in

general. But however deplorable thn state of affairs may be, it was an evil of a severe type, and some remedy or other had to be found, lest it should be too late to check the inevitabln catastrophe in society. Among thn workers who took to combatting this evil was one Miss Maria Susan Rye who had, even during its earlier stages, come to the conclusion that the only effectual remedy lay in arranging the emigration of women to the colonies, rather than in opening up new professions for women at home. It was to the organisation of this empire-building movement that she devoted herself heart and soul, not from self-complacency or ostentation but actuated by purely self-less devotion to the cause of humanity and merely as a labour for the good of her fellow women, in order to replace misery, squalor and degradation by a prosperous, honest, and honourable life among women in gene-

ral. Let us now turn to give an account of the life's labours of Miss Maria Susan Rye who may be rightly called a true sympathiser, and Friend of the women emigrants.

MISS MARIA SUSAN RYE.

II

Maria Susan Rye, born in 1825, was the eldest daughter of Mr. Edward Rye, a Solicitor who belonged to an ancient Norfolk family of Baconsthrope. Her mother was a Sussex woman of Quaker extraction. Her parents resided at Chelsea where three decades of Miss Rye's life were spent, and it was then that she had the opportunity of forming the acquaintance of Carlyle, the philosopher, Froude, the Tractarian, and Kingsley, the Christian Socialist. The last named belonged to that Maurice school of socialists who urged the need for great changes in the social order and held that a reorganisation of society

was an essential part of Christianity. Her acquaintance with this gentleman proved a great asset in her work later in life.

She was sent to school at Wokingham, but owing to her delicate health, she had to return home to Chelsea. The education of girls in those days was very defective, and so she was put in the charge of a nurse. Besides this, her father's library was at her disposal; she made as good a use of it as she could, and this laid the foundation of her real education. The Bible and Robinson Crusoe were her two favourite books which gave her the real stimulus, necessary for mental training. In the Bible, she read that the earth is the Lord's creation which He hath given to men; and in Robinson Crusoe she read that the wonderful possibilities and charms that the earth hold for men lay open to them, if only they would care to have them. In her juve-

nile brain these scriptural passages and the scenes in Robinson Crusoe got muddled up and she would argue to herself; if God hath given such a wonderful earth to His children, why deny His gift and why should men not go out and take possession of this earth with all its untold charms, instead of crowding in big cities like London. These thoughts implanted the first seeds of emigration in her mind at a time when she was hardly out of her teens. These seeds as time went on gradually developed into ambitious schemes of empire-building and bore fruit in later life.

When Miss Rye reached the age of sixteen, two remarkable events occurred which gave a definite shape to her ideas and furnished material for her juvenile experiments at emigration. In her father's home there was a young nurse who was subjected to a very harsh treatment at the hands of her stepmother.

The young nurse appealed to Miss Rye for a 'way out' of her domestic difficulties, and this gave to Miss Rye the first chance of giving a practical shape to her theories. Miss Rye at once approached the Park Street Commissioners in London who were then provided with a Fund by the Victorian Government for sending out young women to Victoria, and she secured for the young nurse from them a free passage to Victoria. Thus the young nurse was sent off to that colony. Not long after, a similar appeal to her was made by a girl, once her school fellow, who laboured under similar domestic troubles at the hands of her stepmother. Miss Rye prescribed the same remedy for her also, and off went the girl overseas.

By this time, plans of emigration were deeply rooted in Miss Rye's mind. But now she was to face a real difficulty. She could not possibly carry on her

work of emigration without a financial backing which was not, as it seemed to her, forthcoming. Her father, though well-off, would not help her in the least, as he believed that daughters well-provided with all sorts of comforts and luxuries, needed no extra amount over and above what was but necessary for them as pocket money. Finding no way out, she determined to earn money by writing articles for newspapers. Happily conditions in London in this respect were not such as we have in India where every editor wants articles gratis.

III

By a curious coincidence, a newspaper had been lately started by a band of Edenburgh women, of whom certain Miss Bessie Rayner Parker was the originator. It so happened that Miss Rye worte for this journal an article in support of the repeal of the law which deprived all married women of

their power over their own earnings and which at that time was the burning topic of the day. So much was made of the article that Miss Rye was sought for and her acquaintance made by the organisers of the said journal, and this gave her a real start in life.

Miss Rye was appointed as the Manager of the Law-copying class opened by the Society for Promoting the Employment for Women, of which the reader has been told in the last chapter. The financial aid which she now got from the society enabled her to carry on her schemes of emigration pretty easily. But no much headway could be made without a sound financial backing in such a comprehensive undertaking.

In 1861, a meeting of the Social Science Congress was held at Dublin, and Miss Rye read a paper there on the Emigration of Educated Women. Tracing the history of emigration, she

pointed out that the assistance so far rendered by the Park Street Commissioners in this direction was exclusively confined to the working class and that something must needs be done in the way of the educated class for affording them some facilities in emigration. She stated that in Australia and New Zealand the population of females was far less than that of males, and that it was in these colonies that immense scope lay for women. Further she made the practical suggestion that for emigrating educated women thither money should be raised by private loans and subscriptions which could be repaid through easy instalments by emigrants who got established in life afterwards. Miss Rye received a widespread response, and she set about collecting funds. In a year's time she raised £ 200 and sent a number of small emigrant parties to Sidney, Melbourne, Natal, and Canterbury. She then took to appeal-

ling for further funds through the Press. In one of her communications to the Press she stated that of 38 governesses sent out, 18 had begun to earn from £ 25 to £70 a year, and appealed for public support laying stress upon her financial difficulties. Charles Kingsley then followed up with a letter in The Times, strongly supporting her appeal for funds. The immediate result of these articles was that public attention for the first time was attracted and a sum of £ 500 was subscribed by the public to the Emigration Fund already started by private loans and subscriptions. This gave a definite shape to the movement.

IV

In May 1862, the Female Middle Class Emigration Society was established, of which Miss Rye was made the first Secretary. She was helped by a number of women, of whom Miss Jane Lewin, a niece of Grote, the historian, was the

most prominent and sincere worker. By the end of September the Society had sent out 54 persons, almost all belonging to governess class, and had otherwise helped 315 other persons to emigrate. For her hard labours in this noble task Miss Rye became so popular that she was inundated with countless applications from would-be emigrants.

She had sent out two ships of women to British Columbia and one hundred women to Brisbane that she was suddenly alarmed to think of the unknown fate awaiting the emigrants in those far-off colonies, and she thought of accompanying her protegees to make matters smooth for them overseas. Just at that time fortune smiled upon her. She was offered a free passage by the Otago Government for one hundred girls, if she would herself bear them company. This was a God-sent boon and she hailed it with great relief. She accepted the offer and left for New Zealand in Octo-

ber 1862, leaving the affairs of the Society to the management of Miss Lewin. She reached New Zealand with her party after a glorious passage of 98 days. On her arrival, all the girls were immediately provided with suitable situations. She travelled widely in New Zealand educating public opinion in favour of the emigrants, and established for their betterment some three day schools at Hawke Bay. She even approached the authorities at the helm of affairs and prevailed upon them to effect reforms in the direction of affording better treatment to the emigrants.

Having thus cleared the ground for the reception of the emigrants in New Zealand, Miss Rye came to Brisbane. Fortunately at that time some more ships carrying emigrants on board them were arriving there, and Miss Rye had the opportunity of witnessing their landing. She was very much pained to find that the majority of them had

died on the way and that even those small numbers that had survived, were in a semi-dying and much neglected condition, ill-fed, ill-clothed, and ill-treated. This sad spectacle was in itself sufficiently horrifying enough to her; but when she discovered in the hospital of the port not less than thirty orphans, huddled like cattle with the sick and the insane, her pity knew no bounds. She moved heaven aud hell to bring relief to those unfortunate victims. The first thing that she did was to make the Government conscience-stricken to let her have the use of an old building then lying vacant to be turned into an orphan asylum. She succeeded in striking the cord of their sympathy and got the building for the purpose. Miss Rye then went from door to door of the rich begging for beddings, clothing, and other articles of furniture wherewith to furnish the said building for the comfort of the inmates;

and I am glad to say that her words of appeal did not fall on deaf ears. The asylum was started with Lady Bowen, the wife of Sir George Bowen—the then Governor of the Colony—as President, and an Executive Committee was formed to look after the affairs of the institution. For the upkeep of the asylum, Miss Rye herself raised funds and left the asylum thus firmly started in sympathetic hands. The first batch of the orphans admitted to the asylum consisted of those very thirty children she had come across in the port hospital. Later on the accommodation in the asylum was so much increased that it could give refuge to hundreds of disinherited children. Nor was that all. Miss Rye had been chiefly instrumental in getting a couple of colonial Commissions appointed to enquire into the conditions of emigrant ships with the result that things considerably improved from what she had found them.

Having set things shipshape in Brisbane, Miss Rye went over to Sydney, where she had a different experience. There she found that the treatment meted out to lunatics was simply inhuman and revolting to even the stoniest hearts. Lunatics in Sydney, at that time were not even so well treated as cattle now are on the Allan Line. The poor creatures were cast into irons, lest they should prove abnoxious or otherwise dangerous to sane people. Here she took recourse to a conciliatory method of work to produce a salutary effect. Instead of holding protest meetings which would have excited the people and thwarted the noble work that she wanted to do, she adopted a safer but effective course of striking in a genial way the conscience of the official classes among whom she moved. The result was that the desired effect was soon visible, and a change of heart was soon brought

about. The whole question of the lunatics was thoroughly thrashed out and enquired into most sympathetically, and things became far better for them.

From Sydney, Miss Rye came to Melbourne. Here she accomplished a very important work by securing much-needed facilities in London for women emigrants. At Melbourne she found the Victorian Goverment in the throes of an enigma. They were at a loss to understand why the Funds placed at the disposal of the Park Street Commissioners for helping the emigrants to Victoria were not fully availed of, while Miss Rye had her hands full of emigrants. She at last came to their rescue and cut the Gordian knot by pointing out that the conduct of the clerks employed at the Commissioners' office was far from satisfactory, as it was decidedly dishonourable towards the young women emigrants who sought their help. These clerks would go into

hysterics of joy and invariably cut their ribald jokes with the applicants; and this discouraged young women from taking advantage of the Funds in question. Miss Rye's knowledge of this undesirable state of affairs was not based on hearsay, but on the first-hand experience she had gained as early as 1844 when she had had to obtain free passages for the young nurse and her school fellow. She, therefore, suggested to the Government that things could only improve if the selection of women emigrants were given exclusively to women, while the disbursement of Funds rested as usual in the hands of the Commissioners. This reasonable suggestion met the approval of the Government, and they readily undertook to defray the expenses of a Women's Selecting Office to be established for supplementing the work of the Park Street Commissioners. Consequently this women's

office was established in London, and Miss Rye offered to render honorary services.

V

Having thus arranged facilities for women emigrants, Miss Rye returned to England, having been constantly on the move for two years overseas. On her arrival, a warm reception greeted her. In due recognition of her valued services, she was presented with a purse of £100 by eminent ladies interested in the welfare of emigrants. But out of this amount Miss Rye kept not a single penny to herself. The whole sum was devoted to that noble cause of emigration she had so close to her heart.

The Women's Selection Office was established in London in 1866, and Miss Still became the first lady-secretary to help Miss Rye in the work of selecting women. This arrangement naturally enraged the male clerks

who were deprived of many a humourous peep at young women; and so they sought to hinder the progress of the work in every possible way. In their attempts to foil Miss Rye's work, matters came once to such a rub that she felt that she could no longer work with the Commissioners. From the time the women's office was opened, some three hundred women were being sent annually to Australia; and in addition to these Miss Rye sent large parties of women to Canada, through her own personal efforts and chiefly supported by public subscriptions. Not only that, she undertook herself many journeys to Canada on board the emigrant ships.

Meanwhile, a crisis of a far-reaching consequence had been brewing, and she was faced with a storm of difficulties. It not only changed the plan of operations, but also applied an axe to the very root of the whole movement.

Firstly, a hue and cry was raised by many rich families that found themselves denuded of good domestics, consequent upon Miss Rye's sending out women to Canada. Thus the whole brunt of invective fell upon her. The cry gathered to a head and grew so strong that the flow of public subscriptions was greatly checked, and this paralysed the movement to a great extent.

Secondly, since only the selection of women was done by the women's sub-office and arrangements for their shipping were done by the Commissioners, Miss Rye once gave a verbal notice of her intention to send out one hundred girls to Melbourne by a certain date, and asked the Commissioners to have everything in readiness for their voyage. But when the date arrived, no arrangements had been made by them on the ground that no official notice had been given to them. Miss

Rye was at her wit's end. But she being a resourceful woman, forthwith went with post-haste speed to Liverpool to make arrangements for their shipping with a shipowner whom she knew intimately. The gentleman agreed to carry the girls to Melbourne even without any advance. She, however, gave him a letter, asking the Victorian Government to pay off the shipowner, and stated her difficulties which prompted her to do so. The girls reached Melbourne and the shipowner was paid off duly. Still, Miss Rye felt that she could no longer work with the Commissioners who, being in the leading strings of the male clerks, had begun to be at cross purposes with her.

Thirdly, Miss Rye was made the target of criticism levelled against her by the rejected applicants. As the work of selection was done by Miss Rye and her secretary, Miss

Still, they could not agree to sending the refuse of society overseas. Among the applicants there happened to be, women of bad character also, and these Miss Rye would on no account select as suitable emigrants. So these rejected applicants began to cast their many a fling at her and otherwise indulge in much mud-flinging at her.

All these causes greatly discouraged her, and she felt like giving up her work altogether. Had it not been for the following event which came as a ray of light amid the gloom of her despair, she might have brought the whole movement to a stand still.

VI

It so happened that in 1868 Mr. Van Meter of New York came to London where he delivered a lecture in which he related how he and his co-worker, Mr. Brace, had secured relief for the orphans and deserted

children by sending them off west; how they picked up these children, some two thousand in number, from the streets of New York, where the Civil War had left them in utter want and helplessness; and how finally, they had found them a number of welcome homes. Miss Rye was also present at this lecture, and she was deeply stirred. She pondered over the question, and at last determined to take to the emigration of such neglected children, waifs and strays, instead of adults. She argued to herself that if children were taken away before they had developed prejudices in favour of the mother country and were trained in moral principles and disciplined and taught to work, there would be far greater chances of success. Consequently, she wrote a letter to The Times in March, 1869, in which she announced her intention of starting a new branch

of work in the emigration of waifs and strays to Canada, referring to the great success that had attended the work of Mr. Van Meter in New York in this direction. Her proposal was received with great favour, chiefly at the hands of Lord Ashley, Earl of Shaftesbury, Mr. Mowbray Morris, the then Manager of the Times, and Mr. William Rathbone of Liverpool; the last named even subscribed largely to finance the new venture. Subscriptions amounting to £1400 were collected and Miss Rye purchased a house in the village of Niagara, which was once the county prison, and turned it into a "Children's Home". She began to gather children from London, Manchester, Bristol, and Liverpool to send them to that home, where they were to be kept and carefully trained until they were old enough to be required in Canada.

With a start thus made in Canada

and subscriptions flowing in ceaselessly, Miss Rye purchased another house in Peckham which was within easy reach of London. This house was meant to serve as a base for, and to supplement the work of, the house in Canada. In course of time, she was able to provide a large number of girls, thus brought up and trained, to a number of families, churches, and farms in Canada. These waifs and strays, whom she picked up from the slough of despond and abyss of misery, became in course of time after training, the wives of farmers, lawyers, and other well-to-do people in Canada, and were thus enabled to become useful members of society.

For twenty-five years Miss Rye ran these homes herself, and in her last report for 1895 she wrote that out of the thirty thousand English and Scotish children then in Canada, her own numbers were four thousand.

VII

It is gratifying to note that her excellent and humanitarian work of reclaiming the disinherited children was very much appreciated by Queen Victoria herself who granted in 1871 Miss Rye a life pension of £ 70 per annum as a token of her royal recognition. This amount gave to Miss Rye a much-needed financial help, as at that time she was earning only £ 150 a year by her literary writings. But with the death of her close-fisted father she came into inheritance of sufficient ancestral property to be much better off in life.

From the girl of sixteen in her father's home where she muddled up the passages in the Bible and the scenes in Robinson Crusoe and performed her first juvenile experiments at emigration by sending out the young nurse and the school fellow, it is pleasant to see Miss Rye trotting the

globe as a free-lance philanthropist and as an expander of the Empire. The venerable old lady retired to her beautiful little house in Hertfordshire to rest after accomplishing her humanitarian work and self-sacrificing labours in a noble cause. She has immortalised her name, not only as the Pioneer of emigration movement; but also as one of the noblest and best of the women in Victoria's reign. With many a sad and pleasant recollection of the severest difficulties that she had surmounted and of the greatest good that she had diseminated among the children of mankind, she passed into the unknown at the ripe age of seventy-five in 1900.

Surely much will be learnt by girls of every nation from a study of the life of this large-hearted and noble woman.

QUESTIONS.

1. What causes led to the emigration of women to the Colonies?

2. Sketch briefly the early life of Miss Susan Rye.

3. What gave a definite start to the Women Emigration Movement ?

4. Write a short summary of the work done by Miss Rye in the Colonies.

5. Give a sketch of Miss Rye's activities in England after her return from the Colonies.

6. What were the causes that led to the change of the plan of operations and prejudiced the movement ? How was the movement saved from total collapse ?

7. Give a summary of Miss Rye's orphanage work, pointing out the results of that work.

8. What is your estimate of Miss Rye as a woman ?

9. Account for the importance of Miss Rye's work from the following points of view:—

   (*a*) Political,

   (*b*) Humanitarian, and

   (*c*) Social.

10. What lesson do you learn from the life of Miss Rye ?

CHAPTER III

HIGHER EDUCATION

I

IN the early part of the eighteenth century, curious notions about women's education were entertained by people in general. Liberal education for women was like Dudo in Madagascar, and no attention was paid towards their mental development. It was regarded as a sin for a woman to devote her time to such studies as would improve her reason. All that tended to cramp and dwarf the mental faculties of women, was permitted to be their proper sphere of education. The funny part of the matter was that the usefulness of women as members of society, was determined in terms of their

knowledge of general subjects, such as reading, writing, and arithmetic, could no longer stand them in good stead for turning then into useful members of society. The benefits of higher education, broadening their mental outlook and giving them wider knowledge, not only helped women to uproot many social evils of the age, but also conferred upon them many incalculable material benefits which are witnessed to-day in English society.

Among the women who did this sort of pioneer work, the name of Miss Frances Mary Buss cannot but claim special notice. She was the founder of the public Day-school system for the higher education of girls, which led to the expansion of the women's education movement.

MISS FRANCES MARY BUSS.

II

Frances Mary Buss was born in London

in 1827 and was the daughter of Mr. R.V. Buss, the painter. For her education, she was admitted to a private school in Camden where at the age of fourteen she became a pupil-teacher. In 1845, she and her mother opened a school iu Clarence Road. Three years later the Governess's Benevolent Institute was turned into Queen's College, and Miss Buss began to attend its evening classes. As in those days there were no buses plying regularly, she had to go on foot to the college in Camden Town every night, and on her return she had to sit up late at night to prepare her own studies. Thus, studying hard, she obtained her diploma at the Queen's College and became a certified governess. When the Clarence Road Institute developed into the North London Collegiate School for ladies on the model of Queen's College, Miss Buss became its Head Mistress.

The year 1863 was the epoch-making year in the history of women's education in England. In 1862, a Committee with Miss E. Davies as the honorary secretary was formed to urge upon the universities to admit women to their Local Examinations. After a year's hard labour, the Committee succeeded in prevailing upon the Cambridge University to hold an informal examination for girls, but the examination of answer books was left to the Committee's own arrangement with the examiners. To such a first private examination, some 84 girls were admitted, but the failures were so disappointing that Miss Buss came to the conclusion that there was something wrong with the system of girls' education itself. She made another attempt to send up girls to these informal examinations in 1864. Happily not a single candidate failed. These successes astonished everybody

and set men thinking of the powers of the feminine mind which, with proper facilities given, could vie favourably with the masculine mind. Far more important was the fact that admission of girls to the Local Examinations of the Cambridge and Edinburgh Universities was formally authorized in 1865, to that of Durham in 1866 and to that of Oxford in 1870. These achievements marked the first step in Miss Buss's life.

Meanwhile other developments had taken place. In 1864, through pressure brought upon the House of Commons by Miss Emily Davies, the Schools Enquiry Commission was authorized to investigate the state of girls' education, and Miss Buss was one of the important witnesses before this Commission to give evidence in respect of education and employment of women. Miss Buss, by her remarkable powers of expression, exposed to the hilt to that Commission

the hollowness of the system, as it then existed, since it aimed at superficiality and paid scant or no attention to even the rudiments of sound education. As a result of Miss Buss's cogent pleadings, the Commissioners were convinced of the general deficiency of the system and concluded that there was a great need for better schools and better teachers. It was then that Miss Buss set herself to work to achieve this two-fold need.

III

Although at that time there were three colleges for girls—the Queen's, Bedford, and Cheltenham—they were quite inadequate to cater for all requirements of girls in their physical and intellectual training. To meet this want Miss Buss set herself to the task of establishing a well-organized public Day-school for girls. In 1870, thanks to the endowment of £ 20,000 by the Brewer's Company, a trust was formed

which placed the North London Collegiate and the Camden Schools for girls on a public foundation. Miss Buss's own school became the Upper School and was removed to Camden Road; the old premises thus left became the Lower School in Camden Street. Thanks to the contribution by the Cloth-Worker's Company, the latter school was rebuilt with the Great Hall and was formally opened by the Princess of Wales in 1879. These schools were provided with all facilities and necessities which go to the building up of a disciplined life. The North London Collegiate Schools became the pioneers of a number of schools for girls which have come to be established and organized since then.

One of the earliest and best results of the movement had been that a Limited Company of the Girls' Public-Day-school was formed in 1871 with the object of establishing and main-

taining as many superior day-schools as possible in all parts of London. This company was incorporated in 1872, with the Women's National Educational Union. These developments were destined to bring about far-reaching results. The company opened its first school at Chelsea in 1873, designed to correct the defects pointed out by the Schools' Inquiry Commission, the object of this institution being to maintain and discipline the pupils in practical business and the duties of life, in accordance with the provisions of the Elementary Education Act. Incidental to all such big undertakings started against fearful odds, the progress for a time was very slow; but the venture gave such stimulus to women's education in general and educated public opinion so much that, despite discouraging signs that greeted the the early start, the number of requests for such schools became almost over-

whelming; and the company had soon to its credit some 35 schools attended by over 1,000 pupils. The education imparted at these schools was so sound and thorough that it favourably compared with that of the Grammar Schools of the highest class then existing for boys.

The next great step in this direction was taken in 1883, when the Church School Company was formed with Miss Buss as a member on its Council. As further illustration of the work done in the way of providing better education for girls, the company started some 30 schools, including 3 for boys, with some 2,500 pupils on the rolls. The education provided by these schools, both for boys and girls, was of a higher nature, *i.e.*, above the Elementary School Education, and aimed at preparing pupils for various professions, for public and University examinations. The influence of this movement is to be gauged from

the fact that, since then, many high schools came to be established by private or public companies. The net result of these educational activities, is evident from the fact that, towards the end of the nineteenth centunry, there was hardly any important place in the United Kingdom where such schools were not be found, and where, thirty years previously, such schools were not even in the dreams of men.

IV

Now a brief history of the earlier attempts made for providing college education for girls may be given here.

The first college for women was started in a house at Hitchin in 1869, which was turned in 1872 into Girton College at Cambridge. The object of this college was apparently to provide for education above the High School Standard, and it held a position similar to public schools for boys under the

universities. The Girton College soon justified its existence by showing marvellous results. Out of its 525 students, 370 obtained honours according to the Cambridge University Standard, and 41 passed the ordinary B. A. examination. As for the part played by our pioneer, Miss Buss, in advancing the cause of higher education for women, the following remarks of Mrs. Bryant may be read with interest, as they throw a flood of light on the events of that period.

"In the earlier years of the Cambridge Colleges, Miss Buss was one of the most ardent supporters of the attempt to win for women admission to the opportunities and recognition of the older universities. The part she took was very useful, one of supplying students trained in her school, few of whom would probably have gone on to a college career but for her advice and encouragement. But the great mass of social feeling was hostile to the existing state of affairs. It was for the conversion of this hostile feeling that missionary effort was needed, and Miss Buss among her girls and their parents was the most ardent and convin-

cing of missionaries. She would captivate intellectually and persuade morally the girl whom she saw as destined for higher intellectual things, and she educated or persuaded the parents to take her view. Miss Buss created ideals of the future for individuals out of little more than her perception of their capabilities".

Not only then was the Girton movement in the field, but there was also set afoot almost at the same time, another movement which was destined to bear its fruits in Newnham. In 1869, a memorial was submitted to the Cambridge University demanding that advanced examinations should be thrown open to women of 18 years of age. In 1870, the university agreed to hold lectures for these examinations and Merton Hall was provided for women who would attend these lectures. In 1873, an association was formed for conducting these lectures in a better and more efficient manner, and so in 1875, Merton Hall developed into Newnham College for women.

But the most improtant aspect of the progress made in those early days was the announcement in regard to women's education embodying the permission for their admission to degree examinations, which Lord Granville, the then Chancellor of the London University, made on May 15, 1878 on the occasion of presenting the University degrees. An extract of this weighty pronouncement may be given here from a "Note on the Origin of the University of London", as given in the Calendar:

> "After much discussion the Senate and Convocation agreed to accept from the Crown in 1878 a supplemental charter, making every degree, honour and prize awarded by the University accessible to students of both sexes on perfectly equal terms The University of London was thus the first academical body in the United Kingdom to admit women as candidates for degrees."

When this announcement was made Miss Buss was in the gallery. What a thrilling moment it must have been for

her to find one part of her twofold aspiration perfectly realized.

Although so much was done for the higher education of women, the mockery with which it was treated at first is evident from the following lampoon from a suffering girl who wrote:

> "Miss Buss and Miss Beale
> Cupid's darts do not feel,
> How different from us
> Miss Beale and Miss Buss."

V

Now something about the second part of her aspiration, viz., providing better teachers for girls, may be referred to here.

With the spread of education of women the old system of "resident governesses" was getting out of date. The daughters of the middle class were being sent to the high schools instead of being taught at home by governesses.

As the demand for school teachers was increasing amazingly, the resident governesses realized their own shortcomings, so that greater efficiency was expected of them. The well-to-do families that could hitherto afford the luxury of employing them, found themselves constrained to demand of these governesses not so much their practical knowledge as sound academical qualification.

In view of the changed times and of the increasing demand for trained teachers which Girton could not cope with, Miss Buss devoted herself heart and soul to the founding of the Maria Grey Training College for Women. Happily the organisers of this college were the Teachers' Training and Registration Society, founded in 1877, on whose Council Miss Buss was a member. This college formally opened in 1878 was the first college under university inspection and aimed at

imparting instruction in the theory and practice of teaching to women who desired to enter the profession of teaching without engaging themselves in elementary school work. The Maria Grey Institution justified its existence as did the Girton Institute. The certified teachers coming out of this institution got appointments, not only in schools in the United Kingdom, but also in India, the West Indies, and Japan. Many such training schools have since then been opened on the model of Maria Grey, thus fulfilling in a way the aspirations of Miss Buss whose heart was devoted to this phase of the question.

VI

The results of these pioneer efforts have been striking and far-reaching. Thanks to higher education, the lot of women of the middle class improved considerably; they were now far

better qualified to stand on their own legs and earn an honourable living. It has been due to these earlier efforts that women are to be witnessed to-day, winning laurels with men in almost every walk of life, so that there are now women Doctors, women Scientists, women Literary Doctors, and what not. The old "Maid" of the time when Queen Victoria came to the throne, having the little knowledge—which is always dangerous—and no training, a parasite in society, with narrow ideas and querulous temper and eating her heart out for marriage, has given way to the "New Woman" who is qualified in every way and has a wider mental grasp and broader outlook on life, who is independent, shrewd and intelligent enough to take an active part in the life of the country. Such have been the results of the noble work done by Miss Buss who rightly felt that the

greatest good that could be done to girls was to give them a sound education which would stand them in good stead when brought face to face with the hard realities of life.

One can easily imagine how deeply deplored the death of this esteemable lady must have been by many thousands of households throughout the United Kingdom to whose numberless girls she was the fount of sympathy and a real entity. Miss Buss died on Christmas Eve in 1894 at the age of sixty-seven.

QUESTIONS.

1. What were the prevailing notions about women's education in the eighteenth century? And how and when were these notions changed?

2. What was the work done by Miss Buss in regard to providing facilities to women for their training as teachers?

3. Attempt a brief biographical sketch of Miss Buss's life from her birth to her death, dealing with all her educational activities in the cause of women.

CHAPTER IV
MEDICAL PROFESSION

I

IN the early years of Victoria's reign, strange prejudices existed against throwing open the medical profession to women. In fact, it was generally held at that time that men alone had an exclusive right to enter this profession. Apart from considerations of conditions prevailing in the Middle Ages which was a world of its own, in the early years of the 19th century there were women doctors on the Continent, in Italy, in Germany and in France; but in England quite up to the last thirty or forty years of the 19th century, women, who possessed the art of healing, were apt to be

regarded as witches. The hostility to women in this respect dates as far back as the reign of Henry V, when a petition was presented requesting that no woman should practise physics, except on pain of rigorous imprisonment. The only concession that was given to women, was that they could practise midwifery.

The ban on women for the medical profession was regrettable from two important considerations. In the first place, in an age when the necessity of opening a larger number of occupations for women was almost recognized so that they might earn an independent and honourable living, there seemed something tragic in the very nature of circumstances which tended to block all lines of progress for women in the medical profession. In the second place, the ban tended to prejudice their own physical well-being, when we consider that a number of women must

be unwilling for modesty's sake to expose their ailments to male doctors. But important as these considerations were, the general trend of public opinion in England was demonstrably hostile to women taking to the medical profession. An explanation of these prejudices of the age against women, may be found to lie in men's motives of self-interest. They openly held that allowing the women to gain distinctions in the medical profession would tantamount to arming them with a stick to break men's heads. Under such apathetic conditions and in face of time-honoured prejudices, any attempt on the part of a pioneer—especially of a woman pioneer—could not but be an uphill task. Yet many women made bold to take up the cudgels and achieved results of far-reaching consequences by fighting their battle against severest odds and surmounting many a disheartening

difficulty in face of a solid block of stolid conservatism and fierce opposition. Of all the workers in the field the palm must be given to Miss Elizabeth Garrett — afterwards Dr. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson—who, following in the foot-steps of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell of New York, became the pioneer of medical movement in England.

II

Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, though an Englishwoman by birth, had been taken away with her father's family from her birthplace, Bristol, to New York when only eleven. In New York she received her early education, and at the age of 48 took her degree at the Medical School of Geneva, New York. When she came to England in 1859, her name was entered in the British Medical Register as the first qualified woman medical practitioner in Great Britain under the proviso of the Medical Act of

1858, by virtue of a foreign and not a British dègree.

During her stay in England she organized public lectures for demonstrating to the English people the medical work that she had done in New York in founding the "New York Infirmary For Women and Children" which laterly developed into the "New York Infirmary and College for Women." These lectures aroused much interest and influenced Miss Elizabeth Garrett and Miss Florence Nightingale, both of whom were destined to be the pioneers of great movements associated with their names. Dr. Blackwell founded in 1871, during her period of practice in London, the National Health Society, and became greatly interested in the establishement of the London School of Medicine for Women. It was then that the first seeds, of the medical movement were laid in England. Laterly, it fell to the lot of Dr. Elizabeth

Garrett to build the structure on the foundations thus laid.

As the work of Dr. Blackwell was done chiefly in New York, it will be interesting to follow in some detail the work done by our pioneer, Dr. Elizabeth Anderson, in England.

DR. ELIZABETH GARRET ANDERSON.

III

Elizabeth Garrett, born in 1838, was the daughter of a Suffolk gentleman Newson Garrett of Aldeburgh. She was twenty-one years old when she attended the lecture at Marglebone, delivered by Dr. Blackwell, which first roused her interest in the study of medicine. In 1860, Miss Garrett entered the Middlesex Hospital, as a probationary nurse. After some three months, she got the permission of going round the wards with the House Surgeon, but was not allowed to devote herself to any special depart-

ment. Meanwhile, she threw herself into a private study of anatomy, chemistry, and materia medica. Her progress at the Hospital excited the jealousy of the male students, and she was expelled from the hospital.

Miss Garrett then applied to a number of medical schools for admission as a student, but all the institutions declined to admit her on the ground that, as the examining bodies were not prepared to admit women to their examinations, they could not undertake to educate a woman to be an unauthorized practitioner. Then a representation was submitted to the London University on behalf of a number of women, requesting the authorities to make a provision for women's admission in their charter; but this representation too failed to elicit due response, and the applicants were clearly told that the University was not inclined to change

its constitution. Miss Garrett then applied to the Society of Apothecaries for admission as a student. As the object of that society was to regulate the sale of drugs, it could not legally object to her admission. The society admitted her but desired her to complete her courses in subjects she could not be admitted to public classes. This meant that she should receive private instruction for certain subjects, and it obviously meant her further expense. The society hoped thereby that she would be discouraged and would not take advantage of their offer which was not apparently made in good grace. But Miss Garrett was not the woman to be daunted in her grim resolve by such trifles; and she completed her required schedule of lectures by private study and passed the examination. She was then placed on the British Medical Register as the first female practitioner by virtue

of an English diploma. Her example was followed by some three or four ladies who also qualified themselves as medical practitioners in like manner. But this raised a hue and cry from the interested or affected quarters, until pressure was brought to bear upon the Society to withdraw the concession.

IV

In 1866, Miss Garrett opened St. Mary's Dispensary for the treatment of women and children. This dispensary continued to attract larger and larger numbers of women, until it was proved that women really wanted to be treated by doctors of their own sex. For many years, Miss Garrett continued to be the only Medical Officer of this dispensary, until a knot of ladies interested in the work joined her. In course of time, this little Dispensary developed into the New Hospital for women in the Euston Road, where all

the work in medicine and surgery was exclusively done by women.

In 1870, Miss Garrett went to Paris, where she took her M. D. Degree with distinction. The following year she married Mr. J. G. S. Anderson of the Orient Line of Steamships, but her marriage did not prevent her from continuing her practice. In course of time she obtained an established place in the medical profession. In 1874 through the hard labours of Miss Jex-Blake, the London School of Medicine for women was opened, and Dr. Garrett Anderson became the Dean. In 1897 she became the President of the East Anglican Branch of the British Medical Association. Up to the year 1892, she continued to be the Senior Physician of the Euston Road Hospital. Dr. Garrett Anderson's fame now spread like wild fire and the whole country resounded with her praises through a number of articles and

pamphlets in the press.

V

Meanwhile a really statesmanlike work was done by Mr. Russell Gurney who after a series of tough fights, got a Bill passed into law which enabled the examining bodies to extend their examinations to women also. The King and Queen's College of Physicians (Ireland) was the first to take practical steps in the direction pointed out by the said Act, and through that college a number of ladies were admitted to the British Register. Not a week passed, but the London University followed the suit of King's College by deciding to admit women to its medical examinations and degrees. The marvellous results of these pioneer attempts were soon destined to follow. By the close of the year 1896, no fewer than 299 women had obtained degrees and were put on the British Medical

Register as qualified practitioners. The London School of Medicine which was started with a handful of students, had by the end of 1896 no less than 159 students on the rolls. Not only that, by the end of the 19th century, the medical examining bodies that admitted women were: (1) the University of London; (2) the Royal University of Ireland; (3) the Conjoint Colleges of Scotland; (4) the Conjoint Colleges of Ireland; (5) the Society of Apothecaries, London; (6) the Scotish Universities; and (7) the University of Durham.

All these marvellous results were the outcome of the efforts of women alone who set the ball rolling and who for their pioneer efforts became the leaders of great institutions associated with their names—institutions which not only contributed a great deal to their own well-being but also to the healthy regeneration of the Nation.

QUESTIONS.

1. What were the early prejudices prevailing against women's entry into the Medical profession? What were the causes of these prejudices?

2. How and when were the first seeds of the Women's Medical Movement laid in England? What circumstances contributed to the movement's growth?

3. Give a brief sketch of the career of Dr Elizabeth Garrett Anderson.

4. Summarise the main results of the Women Medical Movement in Great Britain up to the end of the 19th Century.

5. What lesson do you draw from this chapter as regards women's capacities for work? Can you apply your remarks to the conditions prevailing in India?

CHAPTER V
NURSING
I

WHEN we feel self-complacency for the progress achieved in art, in science, in locomotion, in commerce, and in education, during the second half of the 19th century, we cannot but be impresed with the revolution brought about in nursing as an art. The profession of nursing which now provides employment for thousands of skilled women, was in an unspeakably wretched stage in England in the early part of the 19th cnetury. The conditions obtaining in regard to this profession in the continental countries

were different. In the continental countries, the sick poor people still depended for nursing on convents and monasteries; but in England the abolition of the religious Orders by the Reformation had wiped these convents and monasteries out of existence. That therefore nursing should be done from the standpoint of religious duty, had become out of court in England, while on the other side of the English Channel it was still a living force. Consequently, nursing in England was relegated to the hands of a class of women who were either vulgar, ignorant or immoral, and who had somehow to make a living as an alternative to domestic work. What a "Nurse" at that time really meant has been portrayed by Charles Dickens in his faithful sketch of Mrs. Gamp—a coarse old woman, always ignorant, dirty and brutal, often in bunched-up mean garments, tippling at the brandy-bottle, or indulging in the

worst vices. Here are the very words of Charles Dickens in ' Martin Chuzzlewit :

> " A fat old woman with a husky voice and a moist eye, which she had a remarkable power of turning up, showing the white of it.......She wore a very rusty black gown, rather the worse for snuff, and a shawl and a bonnet to correspond.........The face of Mrs. Gamp—the nose in particular—was somewhat red & swollen, and it was difficult to enjoy her society without becoming conscious of a smell of spirits".

The nurses in the hospitals were notoriously immoral; and they could hardly be trusted to carry out the simplest medical duties, except that their aid to the dying was to remove pillows and bedclothes to hasten their end. It is, therefore, not surprising that nursing continued to be in bad odour, until the consecrating touch of that philanthropist, Miss Florence Nightingale, put things in order as if by a miracle. The Lady With The Lamp ennobled the profession and raised it

to a regular art. The credit for placing the profession on a proper footing and for knocking out the time-honoured prejudices and false ideas about it so as to make it a desirable profession for women of any and every position in life, must be given to Miss Florence Nightingale who, turning her back upon a life of luxury and ease, devoted her life's labours to opening the avenues of a new profession for women—a profession for which they are most amply endowed by nature.

Let us now turn to give a brief sketch of her life's labours which gave the much-needed impetus to nursing as a regular movement for the benefit of humanity.

MISS FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

II

Florence Nightingale was born in 1820 of a well-to-do parents, her father Mr. William Florence being a big

landlord. Even in early life she showed a great aptitude for nursing. As a little one, she spent her hours in bandaging the broken limbs of her dolls, and in healing the wounds of a sheep dog by bathings and dressings till he was restored to health. These juvenile experiments made her almost a well-known figure in the neighbourhood of her country house, Lee Hurst, in Derbyshire, so that her guidance was sought eagerly by a number of sick people around her. As years passed on, she came of age to move in society. But the gaiety of the London society, she felt, could not satisfy the cravings of her heart longing for some nobler satiation. She did not marry as she rightly thought that her husband could not give her the nobler relish that her moral nature needed so ardently. She was really designed by Providence to do some nobler work and serve some higher purpose of humanity. She,

therefore, turned her back upon her gay companions and the London society with all its manifold gaieties, and took to the carrying out of the sacred mission of blessing and consecrating humanity, in obedience to a higher call reverberating in her noble heart.

Florence made no secret of showing openly her strong inclination to take to nursing; but her relatives and parents, knowing as they did, the stigma then attaching to the profession, naturally met her resolve with the strongest disapproval and resentment. But she had an iron will and determined to combat all obstacles in her way. While her mother and sisters were taking the waters at Carlabad, she managed to slip off to a nursing institution at Kaiserwerth, on the Rhine, where she remained for more than three months. It was here that the foundation of her future career was laid. She then joined the house of the

Sisters of the Orders of St. Vincent de Paul in Paris, and afterwards visited the chief hospitals of Germany, Rome, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Brussels, spending in all ten years of apprenticeship. On her return to England, she was appointed the Superintendent of the Institute for Sick and Aged Governesses in Harley Street, London. She had not worked long there when the real event of her life occurred, which was destined to bring her on the crest of fame. The Crimean War broke out, and she applied to Mr. Sidney Herbert, then at the War Office and in the Cabinet, offering her services for the East. As Sidney Herbert was her intimate friend and knew full well of her supreme capacity for charitable work, he responded to her desire with due alacrity, and appointed her to the office of the Superintendent of nurses at Scutari. Florence, seeing the realization of her

long-cherished desire, would not let the grass grow under her feet in making all preliminary preparations for her start. On November 4th, 1854, she arrived at Scutari with a good store of hospital appliances and provisions, partly collected and partly purchased by spending large sums of her own money. Her presence at Scutari was nothing short of an unmixed blessing; it was like an angel's presence to the sick and wounded. Her experience, her power of organisation, and above all, her kindness and sympathy, soon replaced chaos by order, and infused a new life into those whose lives were entrusted to her care. By her hard work of twenty hours daily—going round the wards with lamp in her hand and ministering to the care of the sick, and managing with admirable ability and tact things worst confounded—she soon diffused solace and soothing peace, wherever she moved, in

a place where anguish and pain and unheard-of misery, were rampant before. Needless to say that the afflicted would kiss her shadow as it fell upon their pillows. She achieved for humanity a victory far greater than the triumph of war.

III

But the close of her work in the Crimea was only the prelude to her still greater work done at home. Her experience in the Crimea brought her a recognition of the fact that study, training, and experience are alike essential to success in nursing as they are in most other occupations in life. So she put herself to the task of setting the whole system of nursing in England on an efficient basis by providing to supply trained nurses. Four months after the Declaration of peace, Florence left Scutari for England. The royal approbation of her services was expressed by Queen Victoria by the

gift of a brooch, designed by the Prince Consert with the inscription "Blessed are the Merciful", and accompanied by a private letter in which Her Majesty expressed the desire "to make the acquaintance of one who has set so bright an example to our sex". Not only that; on her return from the East the feeling of public gratitude took shape in a Subscription Fund close upon £ 50,000 handed to the Lady-in-chief for starting the Nightingale Training School and Home for Nurses, and thus enabled her to realize her dreams of reform on which she had long been brooding. Consequently, the Training School was started at St. Thomas's Hospital which was the forerunner of similar schools started later on throughout the length and breadth of the country. But unfortunately she was not destined, for reasons of her broken health, to play an active part in the management of that

institution, although even in her retirement her advice was always sought to useful purpose.

As years rolled away she became more and more a bedridden cripple, but her influence was still felt. She was the author of various pamphlets and books on nursing which were valuable contributions to hospital and sanitary reform. Before she died in 1910 at the age of ninety years, she had had the satisfaction of having realized her dreams of reform and had fulfilled her sacred mission on earth by opening the ranks of nursing to gentle and educated women. Three years before her death she received the public honour of being offered the Order of Merit which she accepted, propped up by pillows, with the words—"Too kind—too kind."

IV

Now a brief history of the two important nursing institutions—the two

land-marks in the history of nursing in England—be attempted, one of which is associated with the name of Florence Nightingale, and the other with that of no other personage than Her Gracious Majesty, Queen Victoria, who followed up with an institution for nurses as a tangible proof of her royal appreciation of Florence Nightingale's noble work.

1. THE NIGHTINGALE TRAINING SCHOOL AND HOME

This institution was started in 1860 with fifteen probationers at St. Thomas's Hospital under Miss Garden for the training of gentlewomen who might desire to qualify themselves for higher appointments as nurses in the hospitals. Those candidates, who could afford to pay, were required to meet one-half of the cost of their keep, while others, who could not pay anything, were maintained by the Nightingale Fund.

The course of training extended over a period from one to four years according as the nature of the work to be learnt by the candidate required. After completing the terms, appointments were certain; because all the regular nurses at St. Thomas's were recruited from that school. In December, 1867, Miss Osburn was requested by the Government of New South Wales to come out with a number of nurses to work as Lady Superintendent of the Sidney Infirmary. In 1875, Miss Machin, accompanied by four head-nurses, was appointed to the post of Matron of the General Hospital at Montreal. In 1882 and 1884, a number of Nightingale Nurses went to serve with the army in Egypt, although a large number of them had already had good appointments in Berlin, Stockholm, Bombay, Ceylon, Jamaica, and almost all over the world. Thus the direct benefits of the Nightingale School have been universal, not to

mention the wonderful work done by them during the Great War. One would naturally wish that Florence Nightingale were granted a few years more of life to see in the present age the work started by her coming to fruition.

2. QUEEN VICTORIA JUBILEE INSTITUTE FOR NURSES

In appreciation of the noble example set by Florence Nightingale, Queen Victoria herself started the Jubilee Institute for supplying "District Nurses" as the Nightingale School supplied nurses for the Hospitals. The object of starting this institutte was that with a supply of district nurses the poor could be provided with skilled nursing in their own homes. In 1889 Queen Victoria Jubilee Institute for Nurses was established by means of the sum of £ 70,000 which Her Majesty set aside out of the gift presented to her by the women of England. Needless to say, since this

institute had the laudable object of nursing the poor sick people, it could not fail to be one of the greatest good to the greatest number. As arranged by the institute the skilled "Queen Nurses," as they came to be called, were to receive at least one year's hospital training and a half year's district work before they could be called qualified nurses, and if they wanted to go into a country district, they had to take an additional three months' training in midwifery. The head-quarters of the Fund were established at St. Katherines' Royal Hospital and the "District Home" of nursing in Bloomsbury Square became the Central Training School for the Jubilee Institute for nurses in regard to District work. In course of time, it came to be felt that the Jublee Institute could not cope with the demand for nurses in the country; and so the benefit of the Fund was extended to other existing insti-

tutions to be affiliated with the Central Institute. The results of these measures were soon apparent inasmuch as by the end of the 19th century, there were no fewer than 315 nursing associations affiliated with the Central Institute, and the total number of Queens's Nurses set to work in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, was no less than 600.

Never surely was Royal gift more wisely bestowed upon the people than by carrying out the ideals of none else than that Pioneer Woman, Miss Florence Nightingale, who in the words of Wordsworth, was

> "A perfect woman, nobly planned
> To warn, to comfort, and to command."

QUESTIONS.

1. What were the conditions obtaining in England in regard to nursing in the early days of Miss Florence Nightingale? How did they differ from those obtaining in Continental countries? What were the causes of this disparity?

2 Give a brief sketch of the life of Miss Florence Nightingale.

3. Attempt a paragraph on each of the following institutions :—

(*a*) The Nightingale Training School and Home, and

(*b*) Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses.

4. Trace the development of the Movement of Nursing in the 19th century in England and describe the part played by Miss Florence Nightingale in it.

CHAPTER VI
PHILANTHROPY
I

ALTHOUGH in the 18th century attempts at organizing philanthropy were made by the Misses More—Hannah More† and Patty—who had tried to promote the welfare of the neglected poor by starting Sunday Schools, no headway could be made in the direction of organizing philanthropy on a settled basis. Their failure was due to many causes. First-

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† Miss Hannah More, born. 1744, died. 1833, was the most meritorious female writer on moral and religious subjects of the fifth period in English literature. At first, she wrote several plays, but a change having been produced in her mind, her energies were directed to works of piety and usefulness. To counteract the pernicious principles of the French

ly, it was due to lack of a well-organized nineteenth century machinery of legislation in the 18th century. Secondly, philanthropy not being in the air, the very idea of Sunday Schools was repugnant to certain sections of the population. The agricultural classes held that religion, which was the special feature of Sunday Schools, would ruin agriculture; and the Calvinists accused the Misses More of idolatry which they preached in their "*Practical Piety*", and so the Calvinists tried to throw cold water on all the attempts that the Misses More made for advancing the cause of philanthropy.

Revolution, she published in 1794, "Village Politics"; and next, a periodical work, called "The Cheap Repository"; for these she received the thanks of both Houses of Parliament. She afterwards published "Practical Piety"; "Christ Morals"; "Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education", and several other works.

But the credit for thoroughly organizing philanthropy, which became so characteristic a feature of the Victorian Era, must be given to Miss Mary Carpenter who, by rescuing, from the bottomless abyss of sloth and misery, the neglected, disinherited and homeless children given to crimes and treated as untouchables, achieved far-reaching results and contributed far more to the social evolution of the age.

MISS MARY CARPENTER.

II

Mary Carpenter, born in 1807, was the spiritual heir of Miss Elizabeth Fry, the well-known worker for the uplift of the female prisoners in Newgate. Mary Carpenter sought to cure the diseases permeating the social system as early as the year 1831 when her sympathies were for the first time roused in behalf of the poor

and friendless in large towns. She was essentially a Stoic with a disdain for the creature comforts, and like St Paul, she tried to endure hardships at every turn: she would take a cup of gruel for her supper, and a horse-hair seat as hard as a board to sit on.

The starting-point of her most active career, was her visit to Bristol in 1833, when her attention was called by a certain Dr. Joseph to a miserable ragged boy rushing out of a dark entry. She was a woman of quick decision and prompt action. Her decision was at once formed to devote her life to the raising of the gutter children by starting schools for their education—children whom every existing agency would treat as untouchables, deserving of nothing but contempt. As a first step to realize her aims, she founded in 1835 a Working and Visiting Society in Bristol, and after-

wards organized a Ministry to the Poor. In 1846, she opened a Ragged School at Lenin's Mead with only seven pupils, picked up from the lowest stratum of society. These neglected children were among those homeless and all but naked ones who would sleep at nights on door-steps or in empty casks on the quay. Confident of her superb courage and fortified by her boundless enthusiasm, she began to work for the moral and spiritual salvation of these turbulent lads, the products of Satan's workshop. Strange to say, in three months' time she had some 200 of such naughty lads on the rolls, and the premises of her Ragged School was removed in St. James's Back. Her success was due solely to the fact that she made the children thoroughly interested in her teaching.

III

The more she studied the conditions

of these unfortunate children, the more she became convinced that Ragged Schools were not the only sovereign remedy for removing the vices and crimes that disgraced the lives of thousands of these street Arabs. There were children in large numbers who had gone so much astray and fallen victims to habitual crimes that even the Magistrates, committing them for the last twenty years, had not been able to effect anything in the direction of reforming these young culprits. Mary Carpenter decided that something or other must needs be done to check the growing evil among the children, lest it should be too late to improve matters. She consequently wrote a book entitled, "Reformatory Schools for the Children of the Perishing and Dangerous Classes and for Juvenile Offenders", in which she pointed out that real education would alone check the

appalling increase of juvenile deprivity. In the same book, she made the practical suggestion that such education should be given by a system of: (1) Free Day Schools; (2) Feeding Industrial Schools with compulsory attendance; and (3) Reformatory Schools, not virtual prisons like the Park-hurst Reformatory School. To give practical shape to her ideas of reforming the criminal children, she opened a Reformatory School at Kingswood in 1852 with a handred children. She then directed her energies to securing legislative action by educating public opinion; and her attempts soon bore fruits. Thanks to her zealous efforts, a Youthful Offenders Act became law in 1854 which laid the foundation for the reformatory system as it afterwards developed. By that Act, the Reformatory Schools were placed on a statutory footing and under the

cognizance of the Inspectors of Prisons. It also authorized the courts to send to these schools juveniles who had been convicted summarily, or committed for a fortnight's imprisonment. Further, Treasury contributions were authorized and the parents were obliged to pay towards the cost of maintenance.

Emboldened by her successes in the first flush of her attempt, both at securing legislation and establishing boys' reformatory schools at Bristol, Mary Carpenter opened in 1854 a separate reformatory school for girls at Red Lodge. Even these attempts did not bring her the real satisfaction. She felt that these Reformatory and Ragged Schools were only half-way house for removing completely the existing evil among the children in that these schools touched those children only who were convicted and not those children who were not yet convicted:

and as such, these non-convicted children were left exposed to the dangers of contaminating crimes from their surroundings, if left to themselves as usual. She, therefore, resolved to start Industrial Schools where children of the lowest class could receive both food and industrial training, and thus could be kept apart from mischief-mongering.

Although there were two institutions for industrial training already existing, the one started by Sheriff Watson at Aberdeen in 1841, and the other started by the Middlesex Justices at Feltham in 1854, the distinction between the Industrial and Reformatory schools was not clear according to the views of Miss Mary Carpenter. So she tried to make this distintion clear by placing the Industrial Scchools on properly well-defined lines according to her own conception of their utility. As a result of her

sustained propaganda, she made her influence felt upon members of Parliament, and the Industrial Schools Act of 1857 was passed into law which partly carried out her views. In order to translate her ideas into action further effectively, she established two Industrial Schools at Bristol for boys and girls separately as a demonstration of the ways in which the Act of 1857 needed amendments. This led to the passing of two further Acts of 1861 and 1866, which embodied to a greater extent her views.

At the ripe age of sixty-five, she became the leader of the movement for establishing Day-Feeding Industrial Schools for the disinherited and miserable class of children whom no school would even care to touch with a pair of tongs. By educating public opinion and rousing public sympathy in favour of these miserable children, she caused an Act of Parliament passed in 1876

which authorized School Boards to open such Day-Feeding Industrial Schools as would not only afford food to the poor children, but also give them industrial training, in order to improve their lot and make them earning members of society. It is worthy of note that such industrial schools since then have become part and parcel of the educational system of the country.

IV

Having thus firmly established on a settled basis the Reformatory and Industrial Schools, she devoted the remainder of her life to carrying out reforms for improving the lot of Indian women. She paid some four visits to India, and by dint of her influence and actual work in the zenana, she accomplished much for Indian women that was of the highest value from considerations of their place in society. On her

return from India, she organized at Bristol the National Indian Association with a view to spreading a proper knowledge about India and her wants. In 1873, she went to America and organized a movement for prison reform, thus carrying out further the work of Miss Elizabeth Fry whom we have introduced to the reader in the beginning of this chapter.

The end of the busy life of Mary Carpenter, came at the age of 70 in 1877. She was the pioneer of organized philanthropy, not only in India and Great Britain, but also in the farthest corners of the globe. She must be regarded as the real link between the old philanthropy and the new which formed so dominating a feature of the social evolution of the Victorian Era. Mary Carpenter's life cannot fail to afford a great object-lesson to the women of India who,

taking a leaf from her book, may well aspire to be leaders of the untouchability movement, of which so much is made in the present India.

V

Let us now turn to a brief review of the actual expansion undergone by the various institutions referred to above, close upon the end of the 19th century, so as to enable us to appreciate exactly the advent of an era in which charity organization reached an almost culminating point.

Of Certified Reformatory Schools, to which juvenile culprits sentenced by Magistrates could be sent, there were some 50 in Great Britain at the end of 1895 with the total number of admissions nearly 60,000; of juveniles discharged up to the end of 1895, 74 per cent were reported to have reformed their objectionable ways and to be doing well.

Of Certified Industrial Schools, to which children found begging, or otherwise wasting their lives in utter want and neglected conditions, were sent, there were 141 at the end of 1895 with the total number of admissions close upon 4000; of children discharged up to the end of 1895, some 82 per cent were reported to have received industrial training and to be doing well.

Of Day-Feeding Industrial Schools, to which poor children were sent, there were 23 at the end of 1895 with the total number of admissions nearly 555; of children discharged up to the end of 1895, some 65 per cent were doing well.

Of Ragged Schools, to which the gutter children were sent, there were at the end of 1895, 254 Sunday Afternoon and Evening Schools with average attendance, 1808; 53 Week-Night Schools with attendance, 2431.

The Ragged School system in fact underwent great changes in that their work was supplanted by the Board Schools: and the Ragged School Union with some 192 Societies and Committees mainly in London, was at work, carrying out that organization of philanthropy, of which Mary Carpenter was the earliest pioneer.

QUESTIONS.

1. Give a brief sketch of the life of Miss Mary Carpenter.

2. Summarise the actual expansion undergone by the various institutions started by Miss Mary Carpenter up to the end of the 19th century.

3. What object-lesson can the women of India draw from the life work of Miss Mary Carpenter? Frame an outline of the work which in your opinion the women of India should do to drive out untouchability from the fold of Hinduism.

CHAPTER VII

MOVEMENT FOR THE BLIND

I

OF all the movements led by women, the one most astounding was the movement led by a woman who was herself blind. This movement was so thorough that it not only made the street-cry of "Pity the poor blind" a thing of the past, but also proved to the hilt the practicability of that "self-maintenance" theory which was the mainspring of so much energetic action in the Victorian Era. The movement established beyond doubt that not only the sighted can earn their living independently for themselves, but also that the sightless of all

ages, given proper training and encouragement, can be rendered self-dependent and become useful members of society. This glorious achievement of the Victorian Era, brought about a thorough transformation in the lives of the blind, and contributed far more to the social evolution of the age.

The movement for improving the condition of the blind dates back close upon 150 years. The first institution for the blind was founded in Paris in 1784 by M. Valentin Haüy. Before the close of the 18th century the example set in France was followed in England and Scotland by establishing some four institutions for the blind: the School for the Indigent Blind, Liverpool, 1791; the Royal Blind Asylum and School Edinburgh, 1793; the School for the Blind, Bristol, 1793; and the School for the Indigent Blind, London, 1799.

Many such schools followed, but the plan of their operations was limited to the education of the blind children by means of raised letters. There was no provision for those men and women who had lost their sight when adults, and no vocational training was imparted even to those admitted to these schools. Thus the boys and girls so educated could only be at best made fit to read the scriptures in relief letters, sitting at the street corners, in order to move the pity of the wayfarers; and as such, they had still to depend upon public charity for their living. But the credit of making the lot of the blind of all ages really better and making them useful members of society, belongs to Miss Elizabeth Gilbert—the pioneer of the movement for the blind now world-wide in its operations—who rising above her own misfortunes, devoted her thoughts, energies and resources to alleviating the lot of the

blind poor by opening the first workshop for their vocational training.

MISS ELIZABETH GILBERT.

II

Elizabeth Gilbert, born in 1826, was the daughter of Mr. A. T. Gilbert, first the Principal of Brasenose College. Oxford, and then Bishop of Chichester, At the age of three, she was attacked by scarlet fever which, despite all the care of her father, effected her sight so much that she became stone-blind. Thus her misfortunes began almost from the cradle. As a child, she was utterly ignorant of the gloom that surrounded her and that was to make her life gloomy. In her child-like innocence, she would call out to her nurse to light the candle to dissipate the darkness in the room, or express her desire to see the sun rise the next day. But all these ignorant longings made her father only the more sorry for her lot,

and he tried in every possible way to make her feel as happy as his other children. She was by nature shrewd. A sign of her early precocity may be seen from the fact that she could, even as mere child, fill her father's wine-cup at the dinner-table without spilling a single drop of the liquid; and this wonderful act she could do from an idea of the weight of the liquid formed in her juvenile brain. Her father began her education by word of mouth, partly to divest her attention from her affliction, but mainly to develop her natural shrewdness. She then began to grow amidst gloom, until the first gleames of sense flashed within her, and made her conscious of the misfortunes that seemed to await her in life. When she came of age and knew of her sisters getting married, she felt the real sting of that cruel destiny that seemed irrevocably to doom her. She thenceforth fell a prey to silent mental tortures

that disturbed her. She felt she could not enjoy the ideal happiness of being the mistress of a home. She would, therefore, sit apart and silent, brooding over her cruel fate. Oftentimes, torrents of tears trickled down her cheeks, which were only expressive of the under-currents of her unutterable sorrow. Yet despite her physical defect, which was a permanent bar to her society in life, Miss Elizabeth Gilbert, instead of wasting her life in misery and dependence on others, not only made herself a useful member of society, but also became the pioneer of that great movement which made the lot of her fellow sufferers certainly better and happier throughout the land.

Fortunately, at the age of twenty-five, she had a writing frame--invented by a Frenchman—supplied to her, with the help of which she could do all her writing work and which proved a real asset to her in all her

correspondence which was destined to bear fruits. In 1851, she entered into correspondence with a young blind man, Wlliam Hanks Levy, then assistant-master at St. John's Wood School for the Blind, in order to ascertain from him all information regarding the needs and conditions of the blind and about the nature of the existing institutions for them. After a couple of years, she had an interview with Levy, which was the starting-point of her work for the blind. As a result of the interview, she decided that something or other must needs be done to enable the adult blind to earn their own living by giving them such industrial training and work as they were capable of doing. She, therefore, determined to evolve and put into practice a scheme whereby, with the help of special machinery, certain industries could be worked by the blind, and arrangements for the sale of their manufactured goods be made. To this

new venture she devoted her life's labours; and her parents and relations also heartily concurred in the scheme, as they rightly thought that it would give a new orientation to her own life and rid her from disappointments and occasional lapses of sadness she was subjected to.

III

In 1854, a cellar in New Turnstile, Holborn, was taken on a weekly rent of eighteen-pence for the storage of raw materials to be woıked up into finished products by seven blind men working in their homes. William Levy's services were utilized as Manager at a low starting salary of half a crown per week with a small commission on the sales. The work grew so much in volume that within six months the workshop was removed to a house in Cromer Street, Brunswick Square, and at the end of eight months, following

up the steady increase of operations, a further removal was felt necessary to a house in Euston Road, which was taken on a rent of £ 26 per year by Levy. The rent of this new building was paid by Elizabeth Gilbert in addition to twelve and sixpence salary to Levy as Manager, and 25% commission on the sales to him and his wife who worked in the shop. The chief goods that were manufactured at first by the blind men engaged, were mats and baskets; but soon Elizabeth felt that other resources must be tapped and other new trades undertaken to meet the increasing demands, as blind women too, becoming tired of beggary, began to bombard her with petitions to give them employment. Levy, an active and resourceful man, who was taking a keen and lively interest in the work, learnt a number of new trades and began to teach them to the blind. In 1855, Elizabeth formed the Associ-

ation for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind, to which Queen Victoria donoted £ 50, and of which she ultimately became patron. The result of these widened activities was that Levy's house became a regular factory for the blind of all ages. The news of these activites soon spread like wild fire to all parts of the United Kingdom and the United States, where a simultaneous movement for the blind began to be thought out and planned. With the expansion of work and the introduction of new industries which Levy had learnt on the Continent, the enterprise underwent remarkable development. The Association was put on a substantial footing by a gift of £ 2000 from Elizabeth Gilbert as an endowment fund. By 1866, the activities of the Association further increased, so that the receipts of the Association came to be £ 7632, and a very large number of blind people were

receiving permanent and profitable employment which made them independent, both of public charity and workhouse for their living. In 1893, after Elizabeth's death, the Association was removed to a handsome and most commodious building in Tottenham Court Road which became its permanent headquarters. Here, not only retail shops and store-rooms were set up, but also manufacturing and wholesale business on large scale was carried on by means of new and costly appliances and machinery. The workshop was also serving as a training school for pupils who were taught different trades on payment of 4*s* or 6*s* a week. Wages were paid to the labourers on the piece system which, however, varied according to the nature of the work and the skill of the worker; but on an average a blind man got from 15s to 30*s* a week, and a blind woman, from 6*s* to 10*s* a week.

Such was the work done by the noble-hearted blind woman, Elizabeth Gilbert, who was the soul of the whole movement. The scarlet fever which had deprived her of sight at the age of three, began to show its after-effects on her health in spinal and throat troubles. From 1872 to 1875, she became practically a bed-ridden cripple, and during the next ten years her malady increased so much in gravity that she could not even dress or sit up. At last in 1885 she was gathered to her fathers, and her trials on earth were at an end.

IV

Among the various manufacturing processes that were carried on in the Tottenham Workshop, may be mentioned chiefly the brush, broom and basket making, done by both blind men and women. All the wood-work including cupboards, bin-like boxes and brush

handles, were made by carpenters who had become blind later in life. Other operations included chair-caning, sash-line making and all kinds of turnery. What is most curious to note is that, for the sale of large quantities of goods manufactured, two travellers, both blind, were employed for securing orders.

That a blind woman could accomplish all this by starting an institution of the greatest good to the greatest number of destitutes, passes one's fancy; and it is nevertheless gratifying to note that the seeds sown by Elizabeth Gilbert bore their wholesome fruits in a very short time after her death. She was the pioneer of the workshops that came to be established in connection with schools for the blind. As a result of her pioneer efforts, there were at the end of the 19th century more than thirty of such workshops in England and Wales, the starting-point of which

was no other than that little cellar in Holborn.

As a fitting conclusion, it must be remarked with regret that in India—not to mention the sightless—even those, who can see, would notc are three straws to play so creditable a role as that blind woman, Elizabeth Gilbrt, did, in alleviating the distress of their fellow-workers. A great lesson is, therefore, to be learnt from her life that in the West even the destitute serve a beneficial purpose in life, and, refusing to be led like dumb-driven cattle, contribute their no small quota in the furtherance of the interests of society. Miss Gilbert's life must serve as an eye-opener to many in India.

QUESTIONS,

1. Sketch briefly the life of Miss Elizabeth Gilbert.

2. Name the various industries carried on in the Tottenham Workshop.

CHAPTER VIII

Y.W.C.A. MOVEMENT

I

FROM a perusal of the foregoing chapters, it must have been evident to the readers that the organizations brought into being during the last fifty years of Queen Victoria's reign in the interest of girls and young women, have been so great in number and so wide in their scope that they include every possible class of operations for good in their sweep. It cannot be gainsaid that, when the good Queen came to the throne, little was being done in this direction, barring a few spasmodic efforts; but at the time of her death, there was a network of associations that tended to disseminate a good and

wholesome influence. not only throughout her Majesty's dominions, but also almost all over the globe. In all these Associations, the pioneer efforts put forward by Mary Carpenter in behalf of organized philanthropy have been the mainspring of all energetic action. Of all such movements concerning the welfare of girls and young women, the Young Women's Christian Association has been the most important; for it is a living and world-wide movement in its operations to this day. In order to convey a fair idea of the general nature of this particular phase of Victorian activity, it is necessary to sketch with a becoming brevity—a brevity which excludes all that is redundant and nothing that is significant—the circumstances that led to the formation of the Y. W. C. A., and of its character and the extent of its development.

LADY KINNAIRD

II

In the history of British philanthropic effort, Mrs. Kinnaird, or better known as Lady Kinnaird, founder of the Y.W.C.A., will rank as one of the most remarkable women of her time. Although her name is chiefly associated with this movement—the best achievement of her life—she, unlike the majority of pioneers, was a perfectly gifted woman who distinguished herself by starting new religious, educational and social movements which had potentialities for good to humanity in all directions.

Born in 1816, she was the daughter of Mr. W. H. Hoare, the banker. In 1841, she commenced her noble work by opening the St. John's Training Home for Domestic Servants. She ran this institution for nearly three decades almost single-handed,

during which period thousands of girls passed through the beneficent influence of the Home. Two years later, she married the Hon. Arthur Fitzgerald Kinnaird, third son of the eighth baron; and this union proved a great asset to her in her work of ennobling humanity, which she had so close to her heart. It was with the help of her husband that she established a girls' school at Paddington where the two institutions functioned side by side. Fortunately, her husband, too, was alike interested with her in Church questions; and that was why he was in full sympathy with her in whatever work she undertook. Consequently, for thirty years, her house in Pall Mall East became a regular rendezvous for Christian and philanthropic workers to meet in conference to discuss and consider movements calculated to further the interests of humanity.

Mrs. Kinnaird was never content with mere academic discussions even on matters and works of the most varied description, as she was a woman always bent upon giving a practical shape to her plans with an unflagging zeal and unremitting exertion to carry them to a successful issue. Varied and many were her activities. At one time she was conducting an almost world-wide correspondence on the subject of a universal union in prayer. At another she was helping in the establishment of the Bible Women's Mission, or the British Ladies' Female Emigration Society. Then, with her active participation, she sponsored a number of missions on the Continent, and evinced real interest and active concern in the abolishment of slavery in Africa. Far more important of her activities—one which cannot but have a special appeal for the Indian girls of to-day—was her work that she did for India.

With an unerring eye, she saw, in the squalor and ignorance of the women of India, one of the crying needs and basic problems of the Empire. The Zenana Bible and Medical Mission was a practical step that she took in the direction of solving the difficulty; and to her credit it must be said that the incalculable good results that have accrued, directly or indirectly, from this mission, have conferred great blessings on Indian women. Not only that; the Mission has been the fount of inspiration for other kindred movements set afoot for the uplift of the women of India.

Turning to Mrs. Kinnaird's work in behalf of Christian women, it was in the year 1855—the fateful year of the Siege of Sevastopol which threw the Empire in the throes of a life-and-death struggle—that she started the movement which was destined to become the Young Women's Christian Association of to-day. As the readers are already

aware, thanks to the efforts of other pioneers, a number of new avenues of employments were opened up for women, which led to an influx of young women into London from the country. These young women, on their arrival in London, were located in dreary and dirty lodgings, and, having no one to go to, found their time hanging heavily on their hands; and, as a result, they were compelled to while away their time pacing the streets all alone by themselves. Mrs. Kinnaird was greatly touched by their dismal condition and sought to do something for their succour. She engaged a house in Upper Charlotte Street and turned it into the North London Home for young women, above the rank of domestic servants, who could afford to pay 10*s*. 6*d*. a week for board and lodging. The Home was provided with a library and other comforts for the inmates. This institute was the pioneer of its kind; and, as a

result, a number of such Homes gradually sprang up, not only in every part of London, but also throughout Great Britain. As a happy coincidence, in the same year, Miss Robarts of Barnet had started a movement for linking together young women all over the country for prayer and work, under the title of the "Young Women's Christian Association" which in 1876 became amalgamated with the one started by Mrs. Kinnaird, and the objects of both branches became identical.

As it is generally the case in new movements set afoot that there are always some sympathisers forthcoming, Lord Shaftesbury became one of its most active and influential supporters. In 1861, Mrs. Kinnaird made a public appeal for funds to enlarge the original Home; and within ten years, there were brought into being two Houses and four Institutes. But the progress being very slow, the supporters felt like giving up

heart and slinking away. Notably, among the supporters, Lord Shaftesbury became very nervous about the future. His pessimism grew so much that it for a time seemed to throw cold water on the good efforts of Mrs. Kinnaird; and this fact might have brought the movement to a standstill, had it not been for the exemplary tenacity of purpose which characterised Mrs. Kinnaird, and which no argument or difficulty could eclipse. Notwithstanding Lord Shaftesbury's despair, she stuck to the helm and got over the crisis. Although her health was failing her, she had a great gift of selecting the right workers and of inspiring them with her zeal and enthusiasm; and this circumstance owed the success and development of her work ever after her death. Her husband died in 1878, and she followed him into Eternal Rest in 1888; but she had left in her own daughter, the Hon. Emily Kinnaird, a worthy

and equally enthusiastic successor to follow in her footsteps and fulfil the noble work started by Mrs. Kinnaird.

III

Now some idea of the comprehensive character of the work of the Y.W.C.A., may be given here to the readers to enable them to judge for themselves the greatness of the task that was so dear to Mrs. Kinnaird's heart, and of which she was the pioneer.

As orignally planned, the Association seeks to provide young women with homes where they can live and have their meals; and institutions where they can spend their evenings for their personal edification. In London itself by the year 1897, there were some fifty Institutes, homes and restaurants under the auspices of the Y.W.C.A. Educational classes, libraries, reading-rooms, girls' "at homes", Bible classes, and Prayer Union meetings—all these

are the various channels through which the Association affords ample scope for a variety of recreation and edification, so that no young woman coming to London feels her life dismal any longer. Not only that: there is an Employment and Agency Department which helps new-comers to get work; a Provident Department which acts as the custodian of the money they earn; a Convalescent Sick Aid and Holiday Department which arranges for their holiday accommodations, and looks after their health; a Travellers' Aid Society which looks to the convenience of travellers, sends representatives to meet them at railway stations or docks; an Emigration Department which helps young women on their start and *en route* to other countries, and also helps them in finding remunerative work in those countries. Besides these, there are other departments too, all of which tend to make the lot of young

women certainly far better than that in the early fifties.

IV

This great movement has not been confined to London alone; it has spread throughout the world in a marvellous manner. In America the Y.W.C.A. movement developed in the wake of the Civil War, when societies, formed by women for helping the soldiers, were turned into institutions for advancing the interests and welfare of their own sex. The "College" and the "City", the two branches as they were originally called and brought into being—the pioneers of the Y.W.C.A. in America—gradually developed into an International Committee of the United States and Canada, comprising a total of 355 Associations and 26,000 members by the end of the 19th century. In Germany, similar associations were formed by the Lutheran pastors. In

the Colonies and many foreign countries, such associations were established by English people who went there to settle. The result of this world-wide development has been that, since Lady Kinnaird started the pioneer Home in London, Young Women's Christian Associations have been established and are still functioning, not only in Great Britain and Ireland, but throughout the wide world, in the United States, South America, Africa, Australasia, India, the West Indies, China, Japan, Syria, and British Guiana. The extension of the movement abroad, creating various National Associations in its train, has culminated in the establishment of "The World's Y.W.C.A.", which has attained the highest degree of intellectual development in cultured fellowship, and is conferring many incalculable and undreamt-of blessings upon God's creation.

Courage and Faith—these were the

two magic talismans that carried our pioneers triumphantly through many a perilous valley of tradition and superstition, many a quagmire of stolid conservatism, many a storm of disheartening invective and denunciation, till they not only reached the glorious peaks of their emancipation in their own generation, but also paved the way for the healthy regeneration of their nation for all times. All these brave and noble-hearted women had, as the poet sings,

> "One equal temper of heroic hearts,
> Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will,
> To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

QUESTIONS.

1. Trace the origin and growth of the Y.W.C.A. movement in London.

2. Summarise the activities of Mrs. Kinnaird in behalf of Young Christian women in London and abroad.

3. What instances would you educe to show the

comprehensive character of the Y.W.C.A. movement started by Mrs. Kinnaird?

4. How would you prove that the movement has spread throughout the world, and that it is still a living force?

5. What in your opinion are the benefits conferred by this movement?

END

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In a small book of this sort lengthy acknowledgments would be out of place. I am, of course, indebted to the standard works, but I must specially acknowledge my debt to the following books from which this book is extracted. To the attentive reader I need hardly say that I owe the largest debt to Edwin A. Pratt for the make-up of this book.

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